DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 112 991 JC 750 542

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TITLE Backgrounds and Characteristics of New Full-Time Community College Faculty Members.
NOTE 20p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.76 HC-$1.58 Plus Postage
DESCRIPTORS *Beginning Teachers; College Teachers; Community Colleges; Degrees (Titles); Faculty Recruitment; *Junior Colleges; Questionnaires; *Teacher Background; *Teacher Characteristics; *Teacher Education; Teacher Placement

ABSTRACT

This paper reports the results of an 11 item questionnaire designed to ascertain the personal characteristics and backgrounds of newly-hired faculty in the 19 state North Central region. Useable responses were obtained from 406 full-time community college faculty who were hired for the 1973-74 school year. Ninety-six percent were white, 57 percent were male, and the vast majority (76 percent) were under 40 years of age. More than half were teaching in allied-health, vocational-technical, or business-data processing areas. Seven percent held earned doctorates, while another 53 percent had completed work on a master's degree; the remaining 40 percent had less formal education, including 34 individuals who did not have a bachelor's degree. Prior contact with community colleges was limited, although 42 percent held community college teaching certificates. Nearly half of the respondents indicated that they learned of the position through the grapevine, and many others were contacted directly by the college; formal placement offices and programs were rarely cited as having played a role in obtaining the positions. Most individuals felt that previous work experience was the most influential factor in securing their job. A copy of the questionnaire is attached. (LO)

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Backgrounds and Characteristics of New Full-Time Community College Faculty Members

In the fall of 1973, 250 questionnaires were sent through the mail to a corresponding number of community college deans of instruction in the nineteen state North Central region. One hundred and fifty-five institutions hired 579 new, full-time faculty members for the school year 1973-74. Each faculty member was then sent a questionnaire; however, eight were non-deliverable. Thus the base number became 571. Four hundred and forty-eight faculty members (78.7%) returned their questionnaires. Of these respondents, though, forty-two held either part-time or non-teaching positions. Therefore, the number of usable questionnaires (new full-time faculty) was 406.

These newly hired faculty members taught in the following areas: Business (including data processing) - sixty-four (15.8%); Humanities (English, speech, modern languages, music, art, theatre, library science, philosophy) - sixty (14.8%); Allied Health (nursing, radiology, dentistry, clinical) - eighty-six (21.2%); Health, Physical Education, and Recreation - fourteen (3.5%); Natural Sciences (biology, chemistry, botany, physics, physical science, math and engineering) - thirty-six (8.9%); Social Sciences (history, psychology, sociology, economics, government, political science, child development, law enforcement, home economics) - fifty-four (13.3%); Guidance and Counseling - six (1.5%); and Vocational-Technical (including agriculture) - eighty-six (21.2%).

Two hundred thirty-two new faculty members were men (57.1%). The relatively large percentage of women hired (42.9%) reflected the

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growth of programs in the allied health and vocational-technical fields. By age, 188 (46.3%) were 21-30; 134 (33.0%) were 31-40; forty-eight (11.8%) were 41-50; thirty-four (8.4%) were 51-60, and only two (0.5%) were over sixty. With regard to ethnic group, 390 (96.1%) were Caucasian (white) six (1.5%) were Black, two (0.5%) were Chicano (Mexican-American), four (0.99%) were Asian, two (0.5%) were Native American (American Indian), and two (0.5%) were Eskimos.

These faculty members possessed a wide range of educational backgrounds. Two (0.5%) held only a certificate or a diploma; two (0.5%) had completed no college hours, while twelve (3.0%) had completed some college hours but had not yet earned a degree. Two (0.5%) had earned an associate's degree, sixteen (3.9%) had completed college hours beyond the associate's degree, and fifty-six (13.8%) had earned only the baccalaureate degree. Seventy faculty members (17.2%) had earned hours beyond the bachelor's degree but had not yet earned the master's degree. Those who had earned at least a master's degree numbered eighty (19.7%), while those who had earned hours beyond the master's degree stood at 136 (33.5%). Only two (0.5%) held a specialist's degree; and twenty-eight (6.9%) had earned a doctoral degree. The hundred thirty-eight respondents (58.0%) had earned their highest degree before 1972, 154 respondents (37.9%) had earned their highest degree since 1972, and fourteen respondents (3.5%) left this item blank.

When asked to indicate their most recent full-time employment prior to accepting their current teaching positions, the results were as follows: business or industry non-teaching - eighty (19.7%); military

non-teaching - two (0.5%); graduate teaching assistant - forty-two (10.3%); graduate student (no teaching) - thirty-six (8.9%); elemntary school teaching - four (0.99%); secondary school teaching - twenty (4.9%); community college teaching - fifty-eight (14.3%); four-year college or university teaching - forty-eight (11.8%), and "other" - 116 (28.6%). Most of the respondents who checked this category were faculty members in the allied health fields (sixty-one). More than half of them had either taught in hospital schools of nursing that had since been discontinued (thirty-eight), were hospital staff nurses (seven), or were public health nurses (six). Four respondents came from private practice; three were in dental hygiene and one was in physical therapy. Six new faculty members were former hospital staff members in recreation, dietetics, or radiology.

People with law enforcement backgrounds comprised the next largest group checking this category (ten). These teachers were, for the most part, former policemen. Two of them, though, were former directors of correctional institutions for boys. Other kinds of former full-time employment included: wilderness school teaching (one), military teaching (six), day care center director (three), federal government work (five), vocational-technical teaching (four), community college administrator (one), university administrator (one), and public school administrator (one). One respondent was a former housewife, one a public school librarian, and two indicated that they had no recent full-time employment.

Item nine on the questionnaire asked faculty members to indicate

how they had learned of their present positions. The results are given in Table I.

An analysis of the response, "other (please specify)," revealed that forty-five respondents were contacted directly by the college; this contact was made through either an administrator or a department head. Fourteen new teachers answered newspaper ads to locate their present positions. Only three respondents found their positions through ads in professional or technical journals. Other sources utilized to locate current teaching positions included: personal visits to campuses (eleven); part-time teaching positions (six); advisement from graduate school professors (four); and use of the AACJC placement service (one).

Prior contact with a community college was very limited among respondents. Only eight faculty members (19.7%) had ever been community college students. Only sixteen faculty members (3.9%) had ever completed a community college teaching internship, and only 104 respondents (25.6%) had ever completed course work directly dealing with the community college. One hundred seventy respondents (41.9%), though, held a community college teaching certificate, while 182 (44.8%) held a vocational certificate.

Item eleven on the questionnaire then asked respondents to rate a series of responses in terms of their importance in influencing them to accept their present positions. The numeric scale was five-most, one-least. The results are presented in Table II. The overwhelming response indicated in the category, "other (please specify)," can be loosely defined as personal choice or personal reasons. More than 100

respondents checked this category, and the range of their responses was great. Some of the reasons given included such statemnts as "I enjoy teaching," "I wanted to return to teaching," or "I wanted to try teaching." Other responses ircluded: the challenge or development of a new program, adherence to the community college philosophy of education, or a chance for advancement. Some felt that community college teaching was better than high school teaching (especially with regard to teaching loads). A few respondents mentioned the presence of a husband-wife professional relationship.

The next largest group of responses was geographic location (twenty-eight). Again, the range was great, with urban or rural setting being mentioned most often. One respondent described his geographic location as a "sportsman's paradise." Other given reasons included: preference for a nine-month contract (five); two listed the size of the insititution as important; availability of a head coaching position, (three), and opportunity to list the community college as a stepping stone to university teaching (two).

The faculty questionnaire closed with two open-ended questions. The first one was: "Why did you choose to teach in a community college?" The response given most often dealt with the curriculum of the college (eighty-seven); next, respondents indicated that they simply liked students (seventy-seven). This response fit in well with the third most commonly mentioned reason: agreement with the philosophy of the community college (sixty-three). This philosophy is, among other

things, heavily student oriented. Nearly as many people also indicated either a devotion to teaching or an interest in "trying out" the teaching profession (sixty-two). These responses seemed to indicate the close relationship between institution and individual in selecting a full-time teaching position.

A large number of respondents indicated that their current positions were obtained because they were the only ones available (fifty-six). In other words, they "desperately needed a job" and, thus, took the first one that became available. It appears that the job market for teachers is not very good regardless of level or teaching specialty. This situation seems especially grim for teachers in areas other than business-related fields, allied health, or vocational-technical.

The third largest number of responses to this question dealt with escaping high school teaching. Forty-two respondents specifically indicated a distaste for teaching in a public high school. For them, the community college provided an opportunity for advancement up the educational ladder, since many had already earned at least a master's degree. Twelve respondents felt that the community college was simply a stepping stone to a university teaching position.

The remaining responses to this question were diverse. For example, an equal number of faculty members mentioned salary advancement and the opportunity to create or to innovate in new programs in community college teaching (twenty-one each). Other respondents mentioned new facilities (thirty-six), good working conditions (fourteen), the issue

of academic freedom (two), and opportunities for professional advancement (eleven). The location of the college was mentioned thirty-six times; this was usually with regard to a husband and/or wife's work schedule or professional relationship. Other diverse responses included: less pressure to earn a doctoral degree (thirteen); obtaining tenure without a doctoral degree (one); the availability of a coaching position (four); the lack of pressure for research and publication (six); and the reputation of the college (four).

The second open-ended question was "What aspect of your background, credentials, or qualifications, do you think was most influential in securing your present position?" The most often mentioned aspect was prior work experience either in education, business, allied health, or vocational-technical fields (263). Academic preparation was the second most mentioned response (188). Recommendations from former employers or professors in college were the third most commonly listed response (sixty).

Other commonly listed reasons were: personal traits (e.g., industrious, enthusiastic) (fifty-nine); prior contact with the college (e.g., an internship in community college teaching, part-time teaching experience, or campus visits for professional evaluation.(thirty-eight); flexibility in teaching specialties or in teaching techniques or philosophies (twenty-one); vocational or cummunity college certification (twenty); sex (especially the hiring of women because of affirmative action) (twelve); professional affiliation (six), age (twelve), ethnic group (five), or simply being in the right place at the right time (ten).

The data collected from the faculty questionnaires revealed that more than forty-two percent of all new teachers hired in 1973-74 taught in the various allied health fields or in vocation-technical programs. This is another indication of how rapidly these preograms are expanding in community colleges in the North Central region. It also indicates how rapidly community colleges are moving away from being merely transfer institutions. The trend is definitely toward vocational-occupational programs which prepare students for almost immediate employment after the completion of a one or two-year terminal course of study.

With the growth of vocational-occupational programs has come an increase in the employment of women (42.9%) and an increase in the number of new faculty members who held either no degree or something less than the baccalaureate degree (nearly 9%). More young teachers were hired in 1973-74; over seventy-six percent were under forty years of age. Most new faculty members were white (96.1%), with other ethnic groups having but a small share of the total percentage hired.

One of the most stable characteristics of community college faculty members has always been the possession of at least a master's degree. In this study, over fifty-three percent still had earned at least a master degree. The stability of this characteristic is reinforced even by McDowell's 1918 study which revealed that nearly forty percent of his respondents had earned at least a master's degree. In spite of its past stability, though, the percentage has actually declined as reported in the 1968

through 1974 Phair studies of new faculty members in Califronia community colleges. His lowest reported percentage holding a master's degree was sixty-five percent in 1973-74. Even closer scrutiny of his work reveals a steady decline in the percentage of master's degree holders from its 1968-69 and 1969-70 high of seventy-eight percent. Nearly forty percent of new teachers had earned less than a master's degree. This figure is higher than any other study since Spencer's 1969 report.

Only 6.9% of all respondents in this study had earned a doctoral degree. This percentage has remained at seven percent for the past two years of Phair's studies; it has never been higher in any of his studies. Wattenbarger's 1963 study of Florida community college faculty members revealed a national high of twelve percent. A 1969 New England study suggested that community college administrators avoided hiring earned doctorate holders because they had to pay them more and because they were generally more interested in research and publication than in classroom teaching.

With regard to former full-time employment, only fifteen percent of the respondents came from public school teaching. This figure is considerably lower than Blocker's 1965 report of sixty percent but only slightly lower than Phair's nineteen percent in 1972-73 and 1973-74. It does suggest a trend toward no longer relying so heavily upon the local public school systems for new teachers. The percentage of new faculty coming from prior community college teaching was 14.3 percent. This is higher than the seven percent reported by Siehr

in Michigan community colleges, but considerably lower than the thirty-one percent reported in Phair's 1973-74 study.

The percentage of new faculty members coming from four-year college or university teaching was nearly twelve percent. This figure is very similar to that found in other studies, except for the 1966 Birnbaum report of New York faculty. He found that 43.2% of all community college teachers who participated in his study had come from this source. The other highest reported percentage was eleven percent in Siehr's 1961 study. Another sizeable number of new teachers (19%) came directly from graduate school, where they were either teaching assistants (10.3%) or merely full-time students. This figure is more than double Phair's 1973-74 percentage (8%). However, a number of studies have revealed even a higher percentage of new faculty members coming from this source. For example, in 1969, Craig reported that twenty-four percent of his faculty respondents had come from graduate school experiences.

The percentage of new teachers coming from business and industry was nearly twenty percent. This compared favorably with percentages reported in other studies. Only the 1964 National Science Foundation revealed a higher percentage (67%). Unfortunately, Phair has not yet recorded data on this source. The figure will probably continue to increase as enrollments in vocational-technical and business programs also increase. The percentage of new faculty members coming from military careers was only 0.5%. Not much data are available for purposes of comparison here. In fact, only Maul's studies from 1961 through 1965 even recorded such information. Phair's studies are devoid of

this data, even though California has, along with Florida and Texas, the greatest number of retired military personnel in the country.

The one category having the greatest number of responses to the most recent full-time employment item was "other (please specify)." Only three previous studies even contained such a category, and their percentages were much lower than the present 28.6%. An analysis of the responses to this category revealed that most of these new teachers came from prior positions in nursing or in related allied health fields. The closing of many hospital schools of nursing and the opening of many associate degree nursing programs in community colleges provided most of these new faculty members. Only a few came from private practice.

The next largest number of responses came from new faculty members in law enforcement areas. Former policemen or administrators of law enforcement agencies have been hired to teach in recently developed programs in law enforcement. The remaining responses came from people with widely diverse occupations: former housewives, wilderness school teachers, and unemployed people.

The most often utilized method of finding teaching positions was that of the "grapevine" or word of mouth. Nearly forty-six percent of all respondents reported learning of their present positions through this method. Formal notification of teaching vacancies at university placement offices of through commercial placement agencies was the next most frequently mentioned method. Almost fifteen percent of all

respondents learned of their present positions through unsolicited letters of application; only six percent learned of their positions from contacts at professional meetings. A few respondents learned of their positions through ads in professional or technical journals or in newspapers. Others were directly contacted by the college for employment.

When asked to rate certain items which were important to respondents in influencing them to accept their present teaching positions, more than fifty-three percent of them placed a high priority on general atmosphere and working conditions of the college. The two tiems which were rated as being the least influential were the promotion and tenure policies of the college and the fact that they desperately needed a job.

Table I

Sources Used by Faculty Members to Locate
Their Present Teaching Positions
(in percentage)

Source	Response	
	Yes	No
College or university placement center referral	6.4	93.6
College or university placement center vacancy bulletin	7.4	92.6
Professional placement agency	2.5	97.5
Professional meeting	5.9	94.1
Vacancy listing from professional (subject matter) discipline	4.9	95.1
Letter of inquiry	14.3	85.7
"Grapevine" - word of mouth	45.8	54.2
State employment service	0.5	99.5
Other (please specify)	33.0	67.0

Table II

Effectiveness of Various Items in Influencing Faculty Members to Accept Their Present Positions (in percentage)

Item	Importance				
	Least				Most
	1	2	3	4	5
Salary	19.2	11.8	31.5	24.6	12.3
Curriculum of the college	22.2	12.8	25.6	22.7	16.3
Other faculty members	33.4	13.3	23.2	18.2	11.3
Attractiveness of the local community	35.0	14.8	16.8	18.2	14.8
Desperate need for a job	54.7	7.4	12.8	8.4	16.3
Promotion and tenure policies of the college	45.3	17.7	18.2	13.3	4.9
Philosophy of the college	30.1	8.9	27.1	19.7	13.8
General atmosphere and working conditions of the college	20.0	9.9	16.3	30.1	23.7
Attitudes, procedures, or techniques utilized by the interviewing college official	29.6	14.8	23.2	18.7	13.3
Other (please specify)	66.5	1.0	0.5	2.0	29.1

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THE FACULTY QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Department or Division in which you teach_____

1a. Your teaching specialty_____

2. Are you employed as a full-time instructor? ___Yes ___No
(if no, do not complete items 3-14 of the questionnaire but return it in the self-addressed, stamped envelope)

3. Sex: ___Male ___Female

4. Age:

___21-30
___31-40
___41-50
___51-60
___Over 60

5. Ethnic Group:

___Caucasian

___Black

___Chicano

___Asian

___Native American (American Indian)

___Other (Please specify_____)

6. Educational Background:

___Certificate or diploma_____please specify

___No college hours earned

___Some earned hours but less than an Associate's degree

___Associate's degree only

___More than an Associate's but less than a Bachelor's degree

___Bachelor's degree only

___Bachelor's degree plus ____hours

____Master's degree only

____Master's degree plus _____hours

____Specialist's degree

____Earned Doctorate

7. Was your most recent degree earned?

____before 1972

____1972-73

8. Most recent full-time employment prior to present position:

____Business or industry non-teaching

____Military non-teaching

____Graduate teaching assistant

____Graduate student (no teaching)

____Elementary school teaching

____Secondary school teaching

____Community college teaching

____Four year college or university teaching

____Other (Please specify)_____

9. How did you learn of your present position? (Check as many as are applicable)

____College or university placement center referral

____College or university placement center vacancy bulletin

____Commercial placement agency

____Professional meeting

____Vacancy listing from your professional (subject matter) discipline

____Letter of inquiry

____"Grapevine - word of mouth

____State employment service

____Other (Please specify)_____

10. Did you attend a community college as a student? ___Yes ___No

Did you complete a teaching internship in a community college? ___Yes ___No

Have you ever completed a course in the philosophy and/or history of the community college? ___Yes ___No

11. Rate the following items in terms of their importance in influencing you to take your present position:
(5-most, 1-least)

5 4 3 2 1 Salary

5 4 3 2 1 Curriculum of the college

5 4 3 2 1 Other faculty members

5 4 3 2 1 Attractiveness of the local community

5 4 3 2 1 Desperate need for a job

5 4 3 2 1 Promotion and tenure policies

5 4 3 2 1 Philosophy of the institution

5 4 3 2 1 General atmosphere and working conditions of the college

5 4 3 2 1 Attitudes, procedures, or techniques utilized by the interviewing college official

5 4 3 2 1 Other (Please specify)_____

12. Do you have a community college teaching certificate? ___Yes ___No

Are you vocationally certified? ___Yes ___No

13. Why did you choose to teach in a community college?

14. What aspect of your background, credentials, or qualifications, do you think, was most influential in securing your present position?

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